



## USDOT Program Planning and Development Opportunity - Federal Railroad Administration

# Corridor Identification and Development Program

The Corridor Identification and Development Program, created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, is a comprehensive intercity passenger rail planning and development program that will help guide intercity passenger rail development throughout the country and create a pipeline of intercity passenger rail projects ready for implementation. The program is administered by the Federal Railroad Administration.

The December 20, 2022 [Notice of solicitation and funding opportunity](#) (or Notice) details the requirements and procedures for the selection of eligible corridors to participate in the Corridor ID Program and obtain grant funding.

**On February 7, 2023, FRA issue a revised NOFO extending the deadline for program applications to March 27, 2023.**

**Successful applicants to the program will enter into a three-step process administered by the FRA:**

- **Step 1:** Develop a project definition
- **Step 2:** Create or update a Service Development Plan (SDP)
- **Step 3:** Complete preliminary engineering and environmental review

The Corridor ID Program is intended both to support a sustained long-term development effort and to set forth a capital project pipeline ready for federal funding from other grant programs. The Corridor ID Program is intended to become the primary means for directing federal financial support and technical assistance toward the development of proposals for new or improved intercity passenger rail services throughout the United States.

As the FRA states in the Notice, selection of a corridor to participate in the program reflects the agency's interest in advancing it to implementation and operation, as well as an FRA decision to fund planning and project development activities for the corridor. Eligible projects include both entirely undeveloped concepts for new or improved passenger rail corridors, and passenger rail corridor concepts that have been the subject of past or ongoing planning and development efforts.

**February 7, 2023**



### **APPLICATION DEADLINE:**

All applications are to be received no later than:

**March 27, 2023  
5:00 p.m. EDT**



## Corridor Development Steps

### Step 1 — Corridor Development Initiation and Scope, Schedule, and Cost Estimate for Preparing a Service Development Plan

If accepted into the Corridor ID Program, a grantee will begin Step 1 by preparing a scope, schedule, and cost estimate to develop a Service Development Plan (SDP), or to update an existing SDP for the selected corridor. This includes developing capability and capacity (both financial and human resources) to support successful preparation of the SDP and conducting Step 3 activities. The FRA will provide \$500,000 to successful applicants to complete Step 1 activities and there is no required cost-share. The FRA will determine when Step 1 activities are complete and the grantee is eligible to advance to Step 2.

### Step 2 — Service Development Plan

After successfully completing Step 1 activities and securing the necessary 10% cost-share, grantees will advance to Step 2 and prepare or update an existing SDP.

**The SDP will determine and document how the corridor will be implemented by:**

- Identifying a draft purpose and need for intercity passenger rail development
- Incorporating an analysis of alternatives for implementing the corridor concept

Work performed during the SDP will include technical transportation planning and conceptual engineering, high-level analysis and consideration of environmental factors associated with the alternatives and input provided through public involvement, coordination with relevant public agencies and, as appropriate, consultation with federally recognized Tribes.

The SDP will identify a single geographic route and set of service characteristics for the corridor that will identify capital projects necessary to achieve the proposed service. The FRA considers the SDP as foundational to inform scoping as part of the environmental clearance process required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which commences in Step 3.

**At a minimum, the SDP will include the following information:**

- Detailed description of the proposed intercity passenger rail service, including train frequencies, peak and average operating speeds, and trip times
- Corridor project inventory that identifies the capital projects necessary to achieve the proposed service and the order in which federal funding will be sought
- A schedule and associated phasing of projects and related service initiation or changes
- Project sponsors and other entities expected to participate in carrying out the plan
- A description of how the corridor would comply with Federal rail safety and security laws
- The locations of existing and proposed stations
- The needs for rolling stock and other equipment
- A financial plan
- A description of how the corridor would contribute to the development of a multi-state regional network of intercity passenger rail
- An intermodal plan describing how the new or improved corridor facilitates travel connections with other passenger transportation services
- A description of the anticipated environmental benefits
- A description of the impacts on highway and aviation congestion, energy consumption, land use, and economic development in the service area.

As with Step 1, the FRA will make a determination when the SDP is complete and which project elements are eligible to advance to Step 3.

## Step 3 — Project Development

After successfully completing an SDP in Step 2, one or more discrete phases of the corridor may advance to Step 3 to complete project development work required to ready the project phases for implementation. Project development in this step includes the completion of preliminary engineering, NEPA and other documentation for the corridor's capital project(s) to advance to implementation, consistent with the FRA's [Guidance on Development and Implementation of Railroad Capital Projects](#).

The FRA will only advance into project development those phases that are likely to continue to implementation and if implemented would benefit intercity passenger rail service on an ongoing basis.

**When determining whether a project or phase is ready to advance from the SDP to Step 3, the FRA will consider:**

- The capability, authority and experience of the grantee
- The content of the SDP
- Whether the grantee has secured the required 20% non-federal match to complete work in Step 3
- Whether the implementation phase is ready to enter project development, consistent with FRA guidance.

## Funding

Under the Notice, the FRA intends to select corridors for participation on the Corridor ID Program and award selected applicants with \$500,000 for eligible Step 1 activities, without any cost-share or match requirements. Funding amounts for Step 2 and Step 3 activities are subject to available funds and are not specified in the Notice. However, as noted above, the Notice does provide for an escalating cost-share through the three steps:

### STEP 1

**Work Activities:** Scope, Schedule and Cost Estimate for SDP

**Award Amount:** \$500,000

**Cost-Share Requirement:** 0%

### STEP 2

**Work Activities:** SDP

**Award Amount:** TBD

**Cost-Share Requirement:** 10%

### STEP 3

**Work Activities:** Project Development

**Award Amount:** TBD

**Cost-Share Requirement:** 20%

The total amount under this initial Notice is undefined but the FRA is authorized to use up to 5% of the \$7.2 billion available under the [Federal-State Partnership Program](#) (approximately \$360 million) to support the Corridor ID program. Importantly, once a project is selected for the Corridor ID Program and initiates Step 1 activities, funding for Steps 2 and 3 is non-competitive. The FRA will award funds for Steps 2 and 3 once the preceding step is complete and the FRA determines the grantee is ready to proceed to the next step.

Identification as a corridor under Corridor ID Program will be considered by USDOT and the FRA in awarding future federal grants, including FRA Partnership Program grants. [HDR has prepared a grant summary](#) of the December 2022 NOFO for this program.

## Eligibility Information

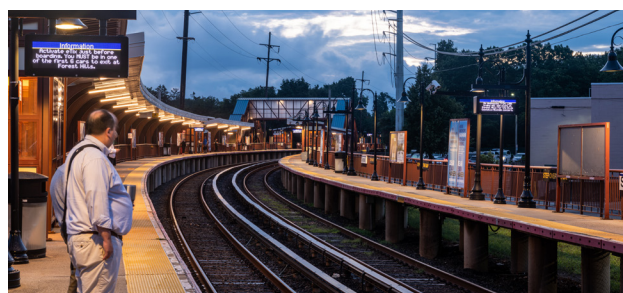
**The following entities are eligible to submit applications for the Corridor ID Program:**

- Amtrak
- States
- Groups of states
- Entities implementing interstate compacts
- Regional passenger rail authorities
- Regional planning organizations
- Political subdivisions of a state
- Federally recognized Tribes

**Eligible Corridors for the program include:**

- A new intercity passenger rail route of less than 750 miles
- The enhancement of an existing intercity passenger rail route of less than 750 miles
- The restoration of service over all or portions of an intercity passenger rail route formerly operated by Amtrak
- The increase of service frequency of a long-distance intercity passenger rail route.

Applicants are not limited in the number of corridors for which they seek participation in the program.





## Evaluation Criteria

The FRA will evaluate applications based on the following criteria:

### Corridor Benefits

- Projected ridership, revenues, capital investment and operating funding requirements
- Anticipated environmental, congestion mitigation and other public benefits
- Projected trip times and their competitiveness with other transportation modes
- Anticipated positive economic and employment impacts
- Benefits to rural communities
- Service to historically unserved or underserved and low-income communities or areas of persistent poverty
- Benefits or improved connectivity with existing or planned transportation services or other modes
- Connection to at least 2 of the 100 most populated metropolitan areas
- Enhancements to regional equity and geographic diversity of intercity passenger rail service
- Integration with the national rail passenger transportation system and creation of benefits for other passenger rail routes and services

### Technical Merit

- Applicant readiness to commence activities under the program and complete, at a minimum, Step 1 and Step 2
- Technical qualifications and experience of key personnel to lead technical efforts, including the qualifications of the primary and supporting organizations that demonstrate the ability to fully, timely and successfully execute Step 1 and Step 2 activities for the corridor
- Commitment to the implementation and operation of the corridor
- Route identification as part of a regional or interregional planning study
- Committed or anticipated Federal funding for operating and capital costs
- Inclusion in a state's approved state rail plan
- Expressed support for the corridor by a passenger rail operator

## Selection Criteria

In addition to the described evaluation criteria, the FRA will apply the following selection criteria:

### USDOT Strategic Goals

- Safety
- Economic strength and global competitiveness, including job creation and supply chain resiliency
- Equity
- Climate and sustainability
- Transformation
- Previous Federal high-speed rail corridor designations

## Application Information

The Notice provides explicit instructions on the required information and components of an application package for consideration under the program, described below:

### Corridor Narratives

- Cover page
- Corridor summary
- Corridor funding
- Applicant eligibility
- Detailed corridor description
- Corridor location
- Evaluation and selection criteria
- USDOT strategic goals

### Additional Forms

- SF- 424 — Application for Federal Assistance
- SF 424A — Budget Information for Non-Construction
- SF 424B — Assurances for Non-Construction
- FRA F 30 — Certifications Regarding Disbarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters, Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying
- FRA F 251 — Applicant Financial Capability Questionnaire
- SF LLL — Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applications must be submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 27, 2023.



**Your Infrastructure Finance, Rail and Planning professionals stand by ready to support project sponsors applying for acceptance into the Corridor Identification and Development Program.**

**If you need any assistance or have questions, please contact:**

Nathan Macek | [nathan.macek@hdrinc.com](mailto:nathan.macek@hdrinc.com) | Catherine Dobbs | [catherine.dobbs@hdrinc.com](mailto:catherine.dobbs@hdrinc.com) | Eric Beightel | [eric.beightel@hdrinc.com](mailto:eric.beightel@hdrinc.com)

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